Mr. Les Payne
Newsroom
Newsday
550 Stewart Ave.
Garden City, N.Y. 11350

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Dear Less

The last month has been a difficult one, climaxing with two particularly difficult days yesterday and the day before. This relates to my King FOIA suit in which while we did less well than we'd have liked to I think we've made a real record and real progress. However, intensive preoccupation with this precluded my keeping up on all the dirtyworks of that motley gang of crooks which has stolen your work and mine.

Without having time to think this through I see two major problems I want to meet. One is this thievery and the other is its consequences, already visible. I don't know how much help you can be or want to be. You have your own life and its requirements and a real adventure and an important assignment ahead.

I have selfish interests in both aspects. It is not only the commercialization of my work by others that bothers me, as it does. I do not want all this work ruined, as the thieves always do. I also do not want this new investigation wrecked from within and by them and I do not want what clearly lies ahead for the Black Caucus in it.

Jim phoned me last night while he was listening to vintage Lane on a Washington station I'm happy to say we can't get out here after dark. Jim was sick at the whole thing but particularly the persisting and dangerous factual error.

NBC has been going around duplicating our work, including your copywrighted work. I missed it but they aired Redditt as their original work on last night's evening TV new. My wife saw it before I was home.

In yesterday's mail I finally received a copy of what I think is Mark's first piece. I have not read it but I enclose a copy. Jim told me there was a new one yesterday and there is to be a series of three.

I'm the devil's who loves scripture, so I'll have to take time for proper meditation once I have all this scripture. I am without doubt about what the fact will be but I am with many doubts about what will be possible thereafter.

Aside from the hurt to me, whether or not you feel this also of yourself, I see two disasters ahead as a consequence of all this whoring around, with clear precedent for them in three aborted prior official investigations. The overall investigation will be at least tainted, as will that of the King assassination, and there is real potential for harm to the black members of the King subcommittee, with further disillusionment at least for many blacks, especially the youth. It is possible that the feds can turn both investigations around. (This is one of the things I'm fighting in court, where we'll be able to learn from the FBI that these same crooks are already on my back in FOIA.)

I feel it is essential that I get to spend some time with some of the responsible members of the subcommittee. At best this will be awkward. I have not yet seen the morning paper so I do not know who they are other than Fauntroy, to whom I presume you did not get to speak because I've not heard from you that you did.

If you have any suggestions, I'd appreciate them. If you would also like to do some talking to them, which I'd welcome, if you have time, I'd like to be along.

It is inevitable, I think, that I'll have to make a frontal assault on all of this in whatever way may be possible to prevent what is certain, regardless of the extent of the evil that is already far along. I do not want to rush in and I do not want to err in the manner in which I do this. Here in particular I'd welcome advice. Hastily,